

# **Media Advisory**

For Immediate Release March 25, 2013

James J. Peters Veteran, Theresa Hannigan, greets and demonstrates the ReWalk to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Barack Obama







Bronx, NY – Investigators at the James J. Peters VA Medical Center in Bronx, New York, are pleased to announce that one of their "ReWalkers," Army Veteran Theresa Hannigan, has participated in a high-level demonstration of the exoskeleton walking device, known as the ReWalk. The event, which was held in Israel during the visit by U.S. President Barack Obama, featured high-tech demonstrations by several Israeli companies. Among those companies that participated was Argo Medical Technologies, Inc., whose invention, the ReWalk, is being extensively studied at the James J. Peters VA Medical Center, which is the first hospital in the country to study the effects of walking with the ReWalk on the medical problems associated with spinal cord injury.

## Quote by Principal Investigator, Ann M. Spungen, EdD

"Our participants with spinal cord injury are able to use the ReWalk to walk distances of over 1 kilometer during a session and at velocities of 0.40 to 0.60 meters per sec (for example, 130 to 160 meters in 6 minutes) showing the future potential of this device to be used for community ambulation. Being upright and walking is obviously good for us, and the same is also the case for people with paralysis. The preliminary findings suggest that regular walking using the ReWalk for as little as 4 to 6 hours per week lessons several of the adverse medical consequences that are associated with paralysis, such as improving body composition and bowel function."

#### About the ReWalk and Research

Investigators at the James J Peters VA Medical Center have been studying the effects of walking with the ReWalk on the secondary medical consequences of spinal cord injury for a little more than 2 years. Seven participants have been enrolled and completed the research program to date, 3 new participants are currently enrolled and a 4<sup>th</sup> is soon to begin. The preliminary findings have been favorable with regards to improving health and well being. Early results demonstrate improved bowel function, loss of fat mass, improved fitness, improved trunk balance, and in some, gain of lean tissue mass in the legs.

#### About Theresa Hannigan...

Army Veteran Theresa Hannigan contracted an autoimmune disease in her late 20's during her military service. This disease eventually left her with motor-complete paraplegia. Since her paralysis, Terry became a highly visible spokesperson for veterans with spinal cord injury. She was enrolled in the ReWalk research program in fall of 2011, quickly becoming a proficient



ReWalker. She continues to promote awareness for spinal cord injury research and disabled veterans. Recently, she walked a 1-mile race in the ReWalk to raise money for the organization "Hope for the Warriors". While participating in the ReWalk study, she experienced many positive changes in her health and in her quality of life, including losing about 35 pounds, reducing her insulin dose and bowel evacuation medications, feeling stronger and healthier, and more fit. Beyond the medical benefits experienced, when in the ReWalk, Terry reports overwhelming joy to be at eye level, to stand, walk and climb stairs again on her own.

## Quote by another ReWalker, Air Force Veteran Lieutenant Ian Brown



"This is the first time a device has been built that adapts people with paralysis to existing environments, instead of adapting the environment to our wheelchairs." Ian J. Brown

### Web Links to recent media coverage of ReWalk:

http://www.pharmiweb.com/pressreleases/pressrel.asp?ROW\_ID=72261

http://www.telegram.com/article/20121003/NEWS/110039971/1237

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/21/obama-in-israel-behind-the-scenes\_n\_2923954.html?

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\_east/white-house-notebook-an-intimate-view-of-a-presidential-tourist/2013/03/21/b19dca12-9230-11e2-9173-7f87cda73b49\_story.html

http://www.fortmilltimes.com/2013/03/21/2570426/president-obama-views-demonstration.html

http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/21/argo-medical-technologie-idUSnBw6QJDnBa+13a+BSW20130321

http://www.boston.com/news/world/middle-east/2013/03/21/white-house-notebook-obama-the-tourist-close/r0dv8UbuasoTf21TMQTu7K/story.html

For more information related to this story or the James J. Peters VA Medical Center, please contact Jim Connell, Public Affairs Officer, at 718.584.9000, Ext. 6620.

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